



Federal Bureau of Investigation
**INTELLIGENCE
ASSESSMENT**

(U//~~LES~~) Black Identity Extremists Likely Motivated to Target Law Enforcement Officers

3 August July 2017

Prepared by:

FBI

**Counterterrorism
Division**

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(U) Executive Summary

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI assesses it is very likely^a Black Identity Extremist^b (BIE) perceptions of police brutality against African Americans spurred an increase in premeditated, retaliatory lethal violence against law enforcement and will very likely serve as justification for such violence. The FBI assess it is very likely this increase began following the 9 August 2014 shooting o. Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the subsequent Grand Jury November 2014^c declination to indict the police officers involved. The FBI assesses it is very likely incidents of alleged police abuse against African Americans since then have continued to feed the resurgence in ideologically motivated, violent criminal activity within the BIE movement. The FBI assesses it is very likely some BIEs are influenced by a mix of anti-authoritarian, Moorish sovereign citizen^c ideology, and BIE ideology. The FBI has high confidence^d in these assessments, based on a history of violent incidents attributed to individuals who acted on behalf of their ideological beliefs, documented in FBI investigations and other law enforcement and open source reporting. The FBI makes this judgment with the key assumption the recent incidents are ideologically motivated.

^a (U) See Appendix A: Expressions of Likelihood (or Probability).

^b (U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI defines black identity extremists as individuals who seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, in response to perceived racism and injustice in American society and some do so in furtherance of establishing a separate black homeland or autonomous black social institutions, communities, or governing organizations within the United States. This desire for physical or psychological separation is typically based on either a religious or political belief system, which is sometimes formed around or includes a belief in racial superiority or supremacy. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

^c (U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI defines sovereign citizen extremists as individuals who openly reject their US citizenship status, believe that most forms of established government, authority, and institutions are illegitimate, and seek, wholly or in part, through unlawful acts of force or violence, to further their claim to be immune from government authority. The mere advocacy of political or social positions, political activism, use of strong rhetoric, or generalized philosophic embrace of violent tactics may not constitute extremism, and may be constitutionally protected.

^d (U) See Appendix B: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information.

(U) Scope Note

(U) This intelligence assessment focuses on **individuals** with BIE ideological motivations who have committed targeted, premeditated attacks against law enforcement officers since 2014. This assessment does not address BIEs who have attacked law enforcement officers during the course of officers' routine duties, such as responding to calls and traffic stops, in which violent actions were reactionary in nature.

(U//~~LES~~) This assessment addresses the following key intelligence questions:

- (U//~~LES~~) To what extent are BIEs' targeting interests retaliatory?
- (U//~~LES~~) What cross-programmatic relationships influence the BIE movement?

(U//~~LES~~) This assessment is the first FBI analytic intelligence product to assess influences between the sovereign citizen extremist movement and the black identity extremist movement. The FBI has previously reported on BIE retaliatory violence against law enforcement in two products, both of which had findings consistent with this assessment. The 23 March 2016 FBI intelligence bulletin, titled "(U//~~FOUO~~) Black Separatist Extremists' Call for Retaliation in Response to Police-Involved Incidents Could Incite Acts of Violence against Law Enforcement," assessed incidents involving allegations of law enforcement abuse and related legal proceedings would likely lead to BSE calls for violent retaliation and incite these domestic extremists to commit violent acts against law enforcement. The 14 November 2014 FBI intelligence bulletin, titled "(U//~~FOUO~~) Potential Criminal Reactions to Missouri Grand Jury Announcement," assessed the announcement of the grand jury's decision in the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson would likely be exploited by some individuals to justify threats and attacks against law enforcement and critical infrastructure.

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(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//~~LES~~) Reporting in this intelligence assessment was derived primarily from FBI and law enforcement investigations and open source reporting—media interviews of subjects, subjects' posting on social media accounts, and online news articles—deemed credible and reliable. The review of FBI investigations occurred between September 2014 and December 2016. The open source reporting was current as of 17 January 2017. Statements made by the subjects to law enforcement during the course of investigations were particularly helpful to identify motivations behind BIE attacks against law enforcement because ideological motivations are infrequently identified or collected. Additional reporting on the ideological motivations behind BIE attacks would improve the confidence levels in this assessment.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Suspects' Grievances Very Likely Lead to Violent Targeting of Law Enforcement

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI judges it is very likely BIE perceptions of police brutality against African Americans have become organizing drivers for the BIE movement since 2014, resulting in a spike of BIEs intentionally targeting law enforcement with violence. In all six targeted attacks since 2014, the FBI assesses it is very likely the BIE suspects acted in retaliation for perceived past police brutality incidents. Even though five of these attacks occurred following controversial police shootings of African Americans by white police officers, BIE targeting of officers was not, in every incident, based on their specific race.

- (U) On 7 July 2016, Micah Johnson ambushed and shot 11 law enforcement officers, killing five, in downtown Dallas, Texas, during a First Amendment protected protest, before being ultimately killed by police. The five deceased officers were white. The planned public event was protesting recent officer-involved shootings of African Americans in Louisiana and Minnesota. Based on Johnson's journal writings and statements to police, he appeared to have been influenced by BIE ideology.
 - (U//~~FOUO~~) During the standoff with police, Johnson told police negotiators he was upset about recent police shootings and white people, and expressed a desire to kill white people, especially white officers.¹ Johnson searched and liked social media pages of BIE and black separatist groups,² and had been ousted from a local BIE group for being too radical, according to an open source news article.^{3, 4}
- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 23 October 2014, Zale H. Thompson attacked four white New York Police Department (NYPD) officers in Queens with a hatchet. One officer received injuries to the arm and a second officer received an injury to the side of his head. The two remaining NYPD officers at the scene shot and killed Thompson according to open source reporting.
 - (U//~~FOUO~~) According to open source reporting, Thompson was angered after "a recent spate of deaths at the hands of the police."⁵ In his own writings, Thompson advocated for armed struggle against "the oppressors"⁶ and "mass revolt" against the US social, economic, and political systems, which he perceived to be "white dominated." He also described the United States as a "beast" and called for "chopping off" its head, hands, and feet.⁷ NYPD observed tattoos on Thompson's body that indicated he was affiliated with a black separatist extremist group and pocket litter indicating he may have been associated with another black separatist group according to law enforcement reporting.⁸

(U//~~FOUO~~) Convergence of BIE and Moorish Sovereign Citizen Ideology Very Likely Leads to Violence against Law Enforcement Officers

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI assesses it is very likely a few of the BIEs who have targeted law enforcement since 2014 were influenced by more than one ideological perspective. The FBI judges it is very likely in four of the six BIE attacks against law enforcement since 2014, the

perpetrators were motivated by a mix of BIE ideology and Moorish sovereign citizen extremist (SCE)⁶ ideology, a category of SCE ideology. The FBI assesses it is very likely BIE adoption of a Moorish SCE identity reinforced a sense of disenfranchisement from society and a perception that the criminal justice system is unjust.

- (U) On 4 October and 13 October 2016, an individual allegedly shot at two different police stations in Indianapolis, Indiana. The subject left a hand-written note at the scene of one of the shootings, in which he identified himself as a Moor and made anti-white statements. The subject posted pictures on social media of African American men carrying assault rifles behind text calling for social injustice and retribution.⁹ The subject was later involved in a shootout with police during his arrest on related charges according to law enforcement reporting.^{10, 11}
- (U//LES) On 17 July 2016, Gavin Eugene Long ambushed and shot six law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, before eventually being killed by police.¹² The deceased victims included one African American officer and one white officer from the Baton Rouge Police Department, and one white officer from the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office. Long had expressed black separatist rhetoric both on social media and in his manifesto, including rants against "crackers" and reference to an African American male killed by police in Baton Rouge on 5 July 2016.^{13, 14} In his manifesto, Long expressed his frustrations with the police and criminal justice system in the United States and saw his actions "as a necessary evil... in order to create substantial change."¹⁵ A law enforcement search of Long's laptop contained biographical information and residential addresses of two officers involved in the Alton Sterling shooting, and Google searched directions to one of the officer's home address.¹⁶ Long had also declared himself to be a Moor, had changed his "slave" name to the Moorish name Cosmo Ausar Setepenra, and was carrying a Moorish identification card at the time of his death according to open source reporting.^{17, 18}
- (U//LES) On 13 September 2016, an individual reportedly intentionally drove his vehicle toward three white officers with the Police Department in Phoenix, Arizona, outside a gas station, striking two of them before he was arrested.¹⁹ The subject's social media accounts indicated that he was tied to a BIE group and a Moorish group,^{20, 21} and that he was angry over police shootings since at least the killing of Brown in 2014.²² Consistent with BIE statements on social media, the subject stated, "The Caucasian needs to be slaughtered like the pigs that they are right along with the niggas who serve and protect them" according to law enforcement reporting.^{23, 24}

⁶ (U//FOUO) Moorish sovereign citizens are a loose network of mostly African Americans who believe they are sovereign entities who do not recognize the authority of the US Government. Moorish sovereign citizen ideology derives from the Moorish Science Temple of America, a non-violent religious and cultural movement founded in 1913 by Noble Drew Ali, who taught his followers they were not "negroes" but Moors, people of North African Berber and Arab descent. Some Moorish adherents adopt sovereign citizen strategies to assert diplomatic immunity by claiming membership in fictitious Native American tribes, claiming descent from settlers who arrived in North America during the pre-Columbian era, or identifying as foreign nationals or ambassadors. (Source: FBI: Primer, January 2014; "(U) Black Separatist Extremists: An Introduction for Law Enforcement"; UNCLASSIFIED: UNCLASSIFIED: Multiple sources.)

- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 21 November 2014, a BIE was arrested and eventually convicted for purchasing explosives the subject intended to use in the Ferguson area upon release of the grand jury verdict for the police officer involved in the shooting death of Brown.²⁵ He previously discussed a desire to kill the white St. Louis County prosecutor and the white Ferguson police chief who were involved in Brown's case, according to FBI case information. Additionally, the subject had ties to a BIE group²⁶ that had discussed ambushing police.²⁷ Furthermore, the subject had ties to the sovereign citizen movement^{28, 29} filed paperwork declaring himself an "aboriginal/indigenous free sovereign moor,"^{30, 31} and possessed a Moorish identification card according to open source reporting.³²

(U) Perspective

(U//~~FOUO~~) BIEs have historically justified and perpetrated violence against law enforcement, which they perceived as representative of the institutionalized oppression of African Americans, but had not targeted law enforcement with premeditated violence for the nearly two decades leading up to the lethal incidents observed beginning in 2014. BIE violence peaked in the 1960s and 1970s in response to changing socioeconomic attitudes and treatment of blacks during the Civil Rights Movement. BIE groups, such as the Black Liberation Army (BLA), which was created in the early 1970s to "take up arms for the liberation and self-determination of black people in the United States," engaged in murders, bank robberies, kidnappings, racketeering, possession of explosives, and weapons smuggling.

- (U) From 1970 to 1984, the BLA was involved in at least 38 criminal incidents, including 26 armed assaults, 3 assassinations, 4 bombings, and 4 hijackings and hostage takings. Almost half of these attacks took place in predominantly African American neighborhoods and targeted law enforcement officers without regard to their race according to an open source database.³³

(U//~~FOUO~~) BIE violence has been rare over the past 20 years and there is sparse evidence of any convergence with SCEs who adhere to Moorish beliefs, who have historically engaged in nonviolent fraudulent schemes—including production of fraudulent personal identification documents such as International Motorist Certifications, passports, vehicle titles and registrations, and birth certificates—in support of their claims of sovereignty. In addition, although non-Moorish SCEs have committed lethal violence against law enforcement in the past, this violence has typically occurred in response to encounters with law enforcement—for example, during traffic stops or the issuing of warrants—rather than through premeditated, targeted aggression. In addition, not all self-identified Moors are sovereign citizens, and not all sovereign citizen Moors engage in violence against law enforcement or other illegal activity.

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI has previously reported on BIE retaliatory violence against law enforcement in two products. This intelligence assessment addresses actual incidents of lethal retaliatory violence. The previous black identity extremism intelligence products discussed calls for potential retaliatory violence, not actual violent incidents. Recent lethal violent incidents may be indicative of a resurgence of targeted violence within the BIE movement.

(U) Analysis of Alternatives

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI considered the alternative hypothesis that retaliatory violence against law enforcement is not ideologically motivated, but rather a result that some individuals may simply harbor animosity toward police and exploit racial tensions as an excuse to commit acts of violence. The FBI, however, assesses this alternative is very unlikely in the cases analyzed in this assessment because strictly criminal subjects typically commit spontaneous, “defensive” acts of violence against police rather than proactive targeting, and use idiosyncratic reasons unrelated to ideology, such as financial gain and personal disputes, to justify their actions. The FBI further judges it is very likely BIEs proactively target police and openly identify and justify their actions with social-political agendas commensurate with their perceived injustices against African Americans, and in some cases, their identified affiliations with violent extremist groups.

(U) Outlook

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI assesses it is very likely that BIEs’ perceptions of unjust treatment of African Americans and the perceived unchallenged illegitimate actions of law enforcement will inspire premeditated attacks against law enforcement over the next year. This may also lead to an increase in BIE group memberships, collaboration among BIE groups, or the appearance of additional violent lone offenders motivated by BIE rhetoric. The FBI further assesses it is very likely additional controversial police shootings of African Americans and the associated legal proceedings will continue to serve as drivers for violence against law enforcement. The FBI assesses it is likely police officers of minority groups are also targeted by BIEs because they are also representative of a perceived oppressive law enforcement system.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Possible indicators for BIEs posing a violent threat to law enforcement include advocating for violence against law enforcement, violent anti-white rhetoric, attempts to acquire illegal weapons or explosives, and affiliations with others in both the BSE and sovereign citizen extremist movements.

(U) Intelligence Requirements



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(U) This Intelligence Assessment was prepared by the FBI [redacted]
[redacted] of the Counterterrorism Division. Comments and queries may be addressed to the [redacted]
Section Chief by calling 1-202-324-3000 or via e-mail at FBI [redacted]@ic.fbi.gov.

(U) Appendix A: Expressions of Likelihood (or Probability)

(U) Phrases such as “the FBI judges” and “the FBI assesses,” and terms such as “likely” and “probably” convey analytical judgments and assessments. The chart approximates how expressions of likelihood and probability correlate with percentages of chance. The FBI only uses likelihood expressions. Furthermore, the FBI does not derive judgments via statistical analysis and will not use expressions of probability to convey uncertainty in external FBI intelligence products.

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<i>Terms of Likelihood</i>	Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain(ly)
<i>Terms of Probability</i>	Remote	Highly Improbable	Improbable (Improbably)	Roughly Even Odds	Probable (Probably)	Highly Probable	Very Probable
	1-5%	5-30%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-100%

(U) Appendix B: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information

(U) Confidence levels reflect the quality and quantity of the source information supporting judgment. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to assessments, as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates the FBI's judgments are based on high quality information from multiple sources. High confidence in a judgment does not imply the assessment is a fact or a certainty; such judgments might be wrong. While additional reporting and information sources may change analytical judgments, such changes are most likely to be refinements and not substantial in nature.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means the information is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence. Additional reporting or information sources have the potential to increase the FBI's confidence levels or substantively change analytical judgments.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is uncertain, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or the reliability of the sources is questionable. Absent additional reporting or information sources, analytical judgments should be considered preliminary in nature.

(U) Endnotes

¹ (U) Online newspaper article: *The New York Times*: "(U) Five Dallas Officers Were Killed as Payback. Police Chief Says": 9 July 2016; https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/09/us/dallas-police-shooting.html?_r=0; accessed on 17 January 2017; Source is an open-source news article from a reputable news Web site.

² (U) FBI: [REDACTED] 14 July 2016; 20 March 2016; [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source reporting.

³ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI: [REDACTED] 13 July 2016; 12 July 2016; "(U//~~FOUO~~) Set Lead to FBI Houston to Interview [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source reporting.

⁴ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 10 November 2016; 9 November 2016; [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is law enforcement reporting.

⁵ (U) Online newspaper article: *The New York Times*: "(U) Attacker With Hatchet Is Said to Have Grown Radical on His Own": 25 October 2014; https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/25/nyregion/man-who-attacked-police-with-hatchet-ranted-about-us-officials-say.html?_r=1; accessed on 24 January 2017; Source is open source reporting.

⁶ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 16 November 2014; 23 October 2014; "(U) Lead requests to interview former female companions of subject [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

⁷ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI-DHS: Joint Intelligence Bulletin: 27 October 2014 "(U//~~FOUO~~) Lone Offender Hatchet Attack on New York Police Department Officers Has No Apparent Link to a Foreign Terrorist Organization"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source and law enforcement reporting.

⁸ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 24 October 2014; 23 October 2014; "(U) Opening EC-Full Investigation": " UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

⁹ (U) Online news article: Fox 59 News: "(U) DNA ties Zionsville murder suspect to IMPD headquarters shootings": 31 October 2016; <http://fox59.com/2016/10/31/court-docs-dna-ties-zionsville-murder-suspect-tied-to-impd-headquarters-shootings>; accessed on 15 December 2016; Source is open source reporting from a local news organization.

¹⁰ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 7 October 2016; 4 October 2016; "(U) Opening EC": UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

¹¹ (U) FBI: [REDACTED] 8 November 2016; 31 October 2016; "(U) Arrest of [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

¹² (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 17 July 2016; 17 July 2016; [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

¹³ (U) Online news article: *The Daily Caller*: "(U) Baton Rouge Cop Killer [REDACTED] Was Nation Of Islam": 17 July 2016; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] accessed on 8 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

¹⁴ (U) FBI: [REDACTED] 11 August 2016; 29 July 2016;

"(U) Kansascity.com Interview with [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting.

¹⁵ (U//~~LES~~) FBI: [REDACTED] 2 August 2016; 2 August 2016;

"(U//~~LES~~) Baton Rouge and Dallas Shooters Allied to [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting.

¹⁶ (U) FBI: [REDACTED] 21 July 2016; 1 July 2016; "(U) Potential Targeting of Law Enforcement Officers through Open Source Personally Identifiable Information (PII)": UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.

¹⁷ (U) Online news article: NBC News: "(U) What Is the Washitaw Nation, 'Sovereign' Group Baton Rouge Shooter Identified With?": 19 July 2016; <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/baton-rouge-police-ambush/what-washitaw-nation-sovereign-group-baton-rouge-shooter-identified-n612101>; accessed on 8 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

¹⁸ (U//LES) FBI: [REDACTED] 31 August 2016; 29 July 2016; "(U//LES) Baton Rouge and Dallas Shooters Aligned to [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. Source is subject's manifesto.

¹⁹ (U) Online news article: ABC News: "(U) Man crashes into Phoenix officers; [REDACTED] fought with officers after intentional crash"; 14 September 2016; [REDACTED]

accessed on 14 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

²⁰ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 14 September 2016; 13 September 2016; "(U) Opening EC-Full Investigation"; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE, UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²¹ (U) Blog post: Anti-Defamation League: "(U) Black Nationalist Charged With Attacking Phoenix Police Officers"; 15 September 2016: <http://blog.adl.org/?s=black+nationalist+charged+with+attacking+phoenix&x=0&y=0>; accessed on 15 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

²² (U) *Ibid.*

²³ (U) *Ibid.*

²⁴ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 14 September 2016; 13 September 2016; "(U) Opening EC-Full Investigation"; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE, UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁵ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 9 September 2014; 9 September 2014; "(U) Opening EC-Full Investigation"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁶ (U) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 30 June 2016; 1 November 2014; "(U) Closing EC"; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁷ (U//FOUO) FBI: [REDACTED] 17 June 2015; 1 November 2014; "(U//FOUO) Interview of [REDACTED] UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁸ (U//FOUO) FBI: Electronic Communication: [REDACTED] 31 August 2015; 29 August 2015; "(U//FOUO) Kansas City Star article "(U) Sovereign Citizens Now Consist of All Colors and Creeds"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting from a local news organization whose deemed reliable.

²⁹ (U) *Op. cit.*, endnote 26.

³⁰ (U) Online news article: Southern Poverty Law Center: "(U) Extremists Exploit Racial Tensions in Ferguson, MO"; 2015: <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2015/extremists-exploit-racial-tensions-ferguson-mo>; accessed on 11 August 2016; Source is open source reporting.

³¹ (U) Blog post: Anti-Defamation League: "(U) Arrested Black Panther Also Involved in Sovereign Citizen Movement"; 26 November 2014: <http://blog.adl.org/extremism/arrested-black-panther-also-involved-in-sovereign-citizen-movement>; accessed on 11 October 2016; Source is open source reporting.

³² (U) *Ibid.*

³³ (U) FBI: Primer: January 2014: "(U) Black Separatist Extremists: An Introduction for Law Enforcement"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Multiple sources.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI judges it is very likely BIE perceptions of police brutality against African Americans have become organizing drivers for the BIE movement since 2014, resulting in a spike of BIEs intentionally targeting law enforcement with violence. In all six targeted attacks since 2014, the FBI assesses it is very likely the BIE suspects acted in retaliation for perceived past police brutality incidents. Even though five of these attacks occurred following controversial police shootings of African Americans by white police officers, BIE targeting of officers was not, in every incident, based on their specific race.

- (U) On 7 July 2016, Micah Johnson ambushed and shot 11 law enforcement officers, killing five, in downtown Dallas, Texas, during a First Amendment protected protest, before being ultimately killed by police. The five deceased officers were white. The planned public event was protesting recent officer-involved shootings of African Americans in Louisiana and Minnesota. Based on Johnson's journal writings and statements to police, he appeared to have been influenced by BIE ideology.
 - (U//~~FOUO~~) During the standoff with police, Johnson told police negotiators he was upset about recent police shootings and white people, and expressed a desire to kill white people, especially white officers.¹ Johnson searched and liked social media pages of BIE and black separatist groups,² and had been ousted from a local BIE group for being too radical, according to an open source news article.^{3, 4}
- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 23 October 2014, Zale H. Thompson attacked four white New York Police Department (NYPD) officers in Queens with a hatchet. One officer received injuries to the arm and a second officer received an injury to the side of his head. The two remaining NYPD officers at the scene shot and killed Thompson according to open source reporting.
 - (U//~~FOUO~~) According to open source reporting, Thompson was angered after "a recent spate of deaths at the hands of the police."⁵ In his own writings, Thompson advocated for armed struggle against "the oppressors"⁶ and "mass revolt" against the US social, economic, and political systems, which he perceived to be "white dominated." He also described the United States as a "beast" and called for "chopping off" its head, hands, and feet.⁷ NYPD observed tattoos on Thompson's body that indicated he was affiliated with a black separatist extremist group and pocket litter indicating he may have been associated with another black separatist group according to law enforcement reporting.⁸

(U//~~FOUO~~) Convergence of BIE and Moorish Sovereign Citizen Ideology Very Likely Leads to Violence against Law Enforcement Officers

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI assesses it is very likely a few of the BIEs who have targeted law enforcement since 2014 were influenced by more than one ideological perspective. The FBI judges it is very likely in four of the six BIE attacks against law enforcement since 2014, the perpetrators were motivated by a mix of BIE ideology and Moorish sovereign citizen extremist

(SCE)^c ideology, a category of SCE ideology. The FBI assesses it is very likely BIE adoption of a Moorish SCE identity reinforced a sense of disenfranchisement from society and a perception that the criminal justice system is unjust.

- (U) On 4 October and 13 October 2016, an individual allegedly shot at two different police stations in Indianapolis, Indiana. The subject left a hand-written note at the scene of one of the shootings, in which he identified himself as a Moor and made anti-white statements. The subject posted pictures on social media of African American men carrying assault rifles behind text calling for social injustice and retribution.⁹ The subject was later involved in a shootout with police during his arrest on related charges according to law enforcement reporting.^{10, 11}
- (U//~~LES~~) On 17 July 2016, Gavin Eugene Long ambushed and shot six law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, before eventually being killed by police.¹² The deceased victims included one African American officer and one white officer from the Baton Rouge Police Department, and one white officer from the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office. Long had expressed black separatist rhetoric both on social media and in his manifesto, including rants against "crackers" and reference to an African American male killed by police in Baton Rouge on 5 July 2016.^{13, 14} In his manifesto, Long expressed his frustrations with the police and criminal justice system in the United States and saw his actions "as a necessary evil... in order to create substantial change."¹⁵ A law enforcement search of Long's laptop contained biographical information and residential addresses of two officers involved in the Alton Sterling shooting, and Google searched directions to one of the officer's home address.¹⁶ Long had also declared himself to be a Moor, had changed his "slave" name to the Moorish name Cosmo Ausar Setepenra, and was carrying a Moorish identification card at the time of his death according to open source reporting.^{17, 18}
- (U//~~LES~~) On 13 September 2016, an individual reportedly intentionally drove his vehicle toward three white officers with the Police Department in Phoenix, Arizona, outside a gas station, striking two of them before he was arrested.¹⁹ The subject's social media accounts indicated that he was tied to a BIE group and a Moorish group,^{20, 21} and that he was angry over police shootings since at least the killing of Brown in 2014.²² Consistent with BIE statements on social media, the subject stated, "The Caucasian needs to be slaughtered like the pigs that they are right along with the niggas who serve and protect them" according to law enforcement reporting.^{23, 24}
- (U//~~FOUO~~) On 21 November 2014, a BIE was arrested and eventually convicted for purchasing explosives the subject intended to use in the Ferguson area upon release of the

^c (U//~~FOUO~~) Moorish sovereign citizens are a loose network of mostly African Americans who believe they are sovereign entities who do not recognize the authority of the US Government. Moorish sovereign citizen ideology derives from the Moorish Science Temple of America, a non-violent religious and cultural movement founded in 1913 by Noble Drew Ali, who taught his followers they were not "negroes" but Moors, people of North African Berber and Arab descent. Some Moorish adherents adopt sovereign citizen strategies to assert diplomatic immunity by claiming membership in fictitious Native American tribes, claiming descent from settlers who arrived in North America during the pre-Columbian era, or identifying as foreign nationals or ambassadors. (Source: FBI; Primer, January 2014; "(U) Black Separatist Extremists: An Introduction for Law Enforcement"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED: Multiple sources.)

grand jury verdict for the police officer involved in the shooting death of Brown.²⁵ He previously discussed a desire to kill the white St. Louis County prosecutor and the white Ferguson police chief who were involved in Brown's case, according to FBI information. Additionally, the subject had ties to a BIE group²⁶ that had discussed ambushing police.²⁷ Furthermore, the subject had ties to the sovereign citizen movement^{28, 29} filed paperwork declaring himself an "aboriginal/indigenous free sovereign moor,"^{30, 31} and possessed a Moorish identification card according to open source reporting.³²

(U) Perspective

(U//~~FOUO~~) BIEs have historically justified and perpetrated violence against law enforcement, which they perceived as representative of the institutionalized oppression of African Americans, but had not targeted law enforcement with premeditated violence for the nearly two decades leading up to the lethal incidents observed beginning in 2014. BIE violence peaked in the 1960s and 1970s in response to changing socioeconomic attitudes and treatment of blacks during the Civil Rights Movement. BIE groups, such as the Black Liberation Army (BLA), which was created in the early 1970s to "take up arms for the liberation and self-determination of black people in the United States," engaged in murders, bank robberies, kidnappings, racketeering, possession of explosives, and weapons smuggling.

- (U) From 1970 to 1984, the BLA was involved in at least 38 criminal incidents, including 26 armed assaults, 3 assassinations, 4 bombings, and 4 hijackings and hostage takings. Almost half of these attacks took place in predominantly African American neighborhoods and targeted law enforcement officers without regard to their race according to an open source database.³³

(U//~~FOUO~~) BIE violence has been rare over the past 20 years and there is sparse evidence of any convergence with SCEs who adhere to Moorish beliefs, who have historically engaged in nonviolent fraudulent schemes—including production of fraudulent personal identification documents such as International Motorist Certifications, passports, vehicle titles and registrations, and birth certificates—in support of their claims of sovereignty. In addition, although non-Moorish SCEs have committed lethal violence against law enforcement in the past, this violence has typically occurred in response to encounters with law enforcement—for example, during traffic stops or the issuing of warrants—rather than through premeditated, targeted aggression. In addition, not all self-identified Moors are sovereign citizens, and not all sovereign citizen Moors engage in violence against law enforcement or other illegal activity.

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI has previously reported on BIE retaliatory violence against law enforcement in two products. This intelligence assessment addresses actual incidents of lethal retaliatory violence. The previous black identity extremism intelligence products discussed calls for potential retaliatory violence, not actual violent incidents. Recent lethal violent incidents may be indicative of a resurgence of targeted violence within the BIE movement.

(U) Analysis of Alternatives

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI considered the alternative hypothesis that retaliatory violence against law enforcement is not ideologically motivated, but rather a result that some individuals may simply harbor animosity toward police and exploit racial tensions as an excuse to commit acts of violence. The FBI, however, assesses this alternative is very unlikely in the cases analyzed in this assessment because strictly criminal subjects typically commit spontaneous, "defensive" acts of violence against police rather than proactive targeting, and use idiosyncratic reasons unrelated to ideology, such as financial gain and personal disputes, to justify their actions. The FBI further judges it is very likely BIEs proactively target police and openly identify and justify their actions with social-political agendas commensurate with their perceived injustices against African Americans, and in some cases, their identified affiliations with violent extremist groups.

(U) Outlook

(U//~~FOUO~~) The FBI assesses it is very likely that BIEs' perceptions of unjust treatment of African Americans and the perceived unchallenged illegitimate actions of law enforcement will inspire premeditated attacks against law enforcement over the next year. This may also lead to an increase in BIE group memberships, collaboration among BIE groups, or the appearance of additional violent lone offenders motivated by BIE rhetoric. The FBI further assesses it is very likely additional controversial police shootings of African Americans and the associated legal proceedings will continue to serve as drivers for violence against law enforcement. The FBI assesses it is likely police officers of minority groups are also targeted by BIEs because they are also representative of a perceived oppressive law enforcement system.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Possible indicators for BIEs posing a violent threat to law enforcement include advocating for violence against law enforcement, violent anti-white rhetoric, attempts to acquire illegal weapons or explosives, and affiliations with others in both the BSE and sovereign citizen extremist movements.

(U) Intelligence Requirements

b7E

(U) This Intelligence Assessment was prepared by the FBI [redacted]
[redacted] of the Counterterrorism Division. Comments and queries may be addressed to the [redacted]
Section Chief by calling 1-202-324-3000 or via e-mail at FBI [redacted]@ic.fbi.gov.

(U) Appendix A: Expressions of Likelihood (or Probability)

(U) Phrases such as “the FBI judges” and “the FBI assesses,” and terms such as “likely” and “probably” convey analytical judgments and assessments. The chart approximates how expressions of likelihood and probability correlate with percentages of chance. The FBI only uses likelihood expressions. Furthermore, the FBI does not derive judgments via statistical analysis and will not use expressions of probability to convey uncertainty in external FBI intelligence products.

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<i>Terms of Likelihood</i>	Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain(ly)
<i>Terms of Probability</i>	Remote	Highly Improbable	Improbable (improbably)	Roughly Even Odds	Probable (Probably)	Highly Probable	Nearly Certain
	1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%

(U) Appendix B: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information

(U) Confidence levels reflect the quality and quantity of the source information supporting judgment. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to assessments, as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates the FBI's judgments are based on high quality information from multiple sources. High confidence in a judgment does not imply the assessment is a fact or a certainty; such judgments might be wrong. While additional reporting and information sources may change analytical judgments, such changes are most likely to be refinements and not substantial in nature.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means the information is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence. Additional reporting or information sources have the potential to increase the FBI's confidence levels or substantively change analytical judgments.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is uncertain, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or the reliability of the sources is questionable. Absent additional reporting or information sources, analytical judgments should be considered preliminary in nature.

(U) Endnotes

- ¹ (U) Online newspaper article: *The New York Times*; "(U) Five Dallas Officers Were Killed as Payback. Police Chief Says"; 9 July 2016; https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/09/us/dallas-police-shooting.html?_r=0; accessed on 17 January 2017; Source is an open-source news article from a reputable news Web site.
- ² (U) FBI; Information; 14 July 2016; 20 March 2016; "[TITLE REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source reporting.
- ³ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI; Information; 13 July 2016; 12 July 2016; "(U//~~FOUO~~) Set Lead to FBI Houston to Interview [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source reporting.
- ⁴ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication; 10 November 2016; 9 November 2016; "[TITLE REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ⁵ (U) Online newspaper article: *The New York Times*; "(U) Attacker With Hatchet Is Said to Have Grown Radical on His Own"; 25 October 2014; https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/25/nyregion/man-who-attacked-police-with-hatchet-ranted-about-us-officials-say.html?_r=1; accessed on 24 January 2017; Source is open source reporting.
- ⁶ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication; 6 November 2014; 23 October 2014; "(U) Lead requests to interview former female companions of subject [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ⁷ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI-DHS; Joint Intelligence Bulletin; 27 October 2014 "(U//~~FOUO~~) Lone Offender Hatchet Attack on New York Police Department Officers Has No Apparent Link to a Foreign Terrorist Organization"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is open source and law enforcement reporting.
- ⁸ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication; 24 October 2014; 23 October 2014; "(U) Opening EC"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ⁹ (U) Online news article; Fox 59 News; "(U) DNA ties Zionsville murder suspect to IMPD headquarters shootings"; 31 October 2016; <http://fox59.com/2016/10/31/court-docs-dna-ties-zionsville-murder-suspect-tied-to-impd-headquarters-shootings>; accessed on 15 December 2016; Source is open source reporting from a local news organization.
- ¹⁰ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication; 7 October 2016; 4 October 2016; "(U) Opening EC"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ¹¹ (U) FBI; Information; 8 November 2016; 31 October 2016; "(U) Arrest of [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ¹² (U) FBI; Electronic Communication; 17 July 2016; 17 July 2016; "[TITLE REDACTED]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ¹³ (U) Online news article; The Daily Caller; "(U) Baton Rouge Cop Killer [Name withheld] Was Nation Of Islam"; 17 July 2016; [URL REDACTED]; Source is open source reporting.
- ¹⁴ (U) FBI; Information; 1 August 2016; 29 July 2016; "(U) Kansascity.com Interview with [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting.
- ¹⁵ (U//~~LES~~) FBI; Information; 2 August 2016; 2 August 2016; "(U//~~LES~~) Baton Rouge and Dallas Shooters Alluded to [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting.
- ¹⁶ (U) FBI; Information; 21 July 2016; 1 July 2016; "(U) Potential Targeting of Law Enforcement Officers through Open Source Personally Identifiable Information (PII)"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is law enforcement reporting.
- ¹⁷ (U) Online news article; NBC News; "(U) What Is the Washitaw Nation, 'Sovereign' Group Baton Rouge Shooter Identified With?"; 19 July 2016; <http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/baton-rouge-police-ambush/what-washitaw-nation-sovereign-group-baton-rouge-shooter-identified-n612101>; accessed on 8 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.
- ¹⁸ (U//~~LES~~) FBI; Information; 31 August 2016; 29 July 2016; "(U//~~LES~~) Baton Rouge and Dallas Shooters Alluded to [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is subject's manifesto.
- ¹⁹ (U) Online news article; ABC News; "(U) Man crashes into Phoenix officers: [Name withheld] fought with officers after intentional crash"; 14 September 2016; [URL REDACTED]; accessed on 14 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

²⁰ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication: 14 September 2016; 13 September 2016; "(U) Opening EC"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²¹ (U) Blog post; Anti-Defamation League: "(U) Black Nationalist Charged With Attacking Phoenix Police Officers"; 15 September 2016; <http://blog.adl.org/?s=black+nationalist+charged+with+attacking+phoenix&x=0&y=0>; accessed on 15 September 2016; Source is open source reporting.

²² (U) *Ibid.*

²³ (U) *Ibid.*

²⁴ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication: 14 September 2016; 13 September 2016; "(U) Opening EC"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE~~. Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁵ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication: 9 September 2014; 9 September 2014; "(U) Opening EC"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁶ (U) FBI; Electronic Communication: 30 June 2016; 1 November 2014; "(U) Closing EC"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁷ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI; Information: 17 June 2015; 1 November 2014; "(U//~~FOUO~~) Interview of [Name withheld]"; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY~~; Source is law enforcement reporting.

²⁸ (U//~~FOUO~~) FBI; Electronic Communication: 31 August 2015; 29 August 2015; "(U//~~FOUO~~) Kansas City Star article "(U) Sovereign Citizens Now Consist of All Colors and Creeds"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Source is open source reporting from a local news organization whose deemed reliable.

²⁹ (U) *Op. cit.*, endnote 26.

³⁰ (U) Online news article: Southern Poverty Law Center: "(U) Extremists Exploit Racial Tensions in Ferguson, MO"; 2015; <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2015/extremists-exploit-racial-tensions-ferguson-mo>; accessed on 11 August 2016; Source is open source reporting.

³¹ (U) Blog post; Anti-Defamation League: "(U) Arrested Black Panther Also Involved in Sovereign Citizen Movement"; 26 November 2014; <http://blog.adl.org/extremism/arrested-black-panther-also-involved-in-sovereign-citizen-movement>; accessed on 11 October 2016; Source is open source reporting.

³² (U) *Ibid.*

³³ (U) FBI; Primer; January 2014; "(U) Black Separatist Extremists: An Introduction for Law Enforcement"; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Multiple sources.

(U) Distribution

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1. (U//FOUO) Please select customer ID: Select One and function: Select One

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Product's overall usefulness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's relevance to your mission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's timeliness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product's responsiveness to your intelligence needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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